

Mason resigned on the ground that he was not a lawyer. Lee soon died. The work, therefore, fell upon Jeff Pendleton and Wythe, and as Pendleton was not skilled in such business, the burden of the task fell upon Jefferson's old law preceptor. For two years these two worked the revision, going over the whole body of British and colonial statutes, and extracting therefrom a concise and complete system of law for the future government of Virginia, the report of the revisers consisted of one hundred and twenty bills, but these were not adopted in a mass. Bills in the revision were taken up from time to time and passed as the temper of the legislature permitted and the needs of the hour demanded. In 1785 the report was taken up systematically. Jefferson was far away from Virginia at this time; he had left his work in faithful hands. Through the personal efforts of his youthful neighbor and political ally, James Madison, most of the work of the revision was enacted into law.

JEFFERSON AS GOVERNOR OF VIRGINIA

In 1779, at the age of thirty-six, Jefferson was elected Governor of Virginia by the legislature of the State. His father for the honor was the trusted friend of his youth, John Banister, one of the wealthiest men in Virginia and an ardent Tory. The contest was conducted in the most decent manner possible, and ended with good humor on both sides. Patrick Henry, his successful friend, sent him a note of congratulation, and good Jefferson's reply is a model of delicacy and tact. "It has done me much pain," he said, "that the zeal of our respective parties should have ever placed us in the situation of competition; but I was comforted, however, with the reflection that it was competition, not ours, and that the difference of the means by which we decided between us was too insignificant to give pain or me a pleasure, had our dispositions toward each other been such as to admit these sensations." Page had a long and honorable public career, and lived to see the day when Jefferson's time to congratulate him as Governor of Virginia.